

2004 Census Test: Evaluation 9: Effect of New  
Race and Hispanic Origin Questions

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From:                      Frank A. Vitrano *[signed]*  
Chief, Decennial Management Division

Subject:                    2004 Census Test Evaluation Report #9: *Effect of New Race and Hispanic Origin Questions*

The attached 2004 Census Test evaluation of the *Effect of New Race and Hispanic Origin Questions* has been finalized by the Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division. The Quality Process for 2010 Census Test Evaluations was applied to the methodology development, specifications, software development, analysis, and documentation of analysis and results, as necessary. The Quality Process for the 2010 Census Test Evaluations was applied to the methodology development, specifications, software development, analysis, and documentation of analysis and results, as necessary. This evaluation report reflects any comments received during the Senior and Executive Briefing. In addition, comments from the operational customer review have been resolved or incorporated.

If you have questions about this report, please contact Courtney Reiser on (301) 763-4142 or Cynthia Rothhaas on (301) 763-1896.

Attachment

# Evaluation 9: Effect of New Race and Hispanic Origin Questions

FINAL REPORT

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Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2004 Census Test was designed to evaluate major methodological and operational improvements under consideration for the 2010 Census, and was the first site test to be conducted in preparation for the 2010 Census. The 2004 test sites were selected because they contained the demographic characteristics associated with specific test objectives and supported key research questions and evaluation requirements. The 2004 Census Test sites were Colquitt, Thomas and Tift counties in Georgia and a portion of northwestern Queens County in New York. The results of the 2004 Census Test are not intended to provide results that can be generalized to the entire nation. Rather, they can inform us about the feasibility and/or effectiveness of the new or refined methodology.

This report addresses new questionnaire content for the 2004 Census Test. Specifically, it assesses revisions to the Hispanic origin and race questions. The revised Hispanic origin question incorporated minor wording changes in the question stem and the addition of examples for the “Another Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin” response category. The revised race question added examples for the “Other Asian” and “Other Pacific Islander” response categories, added a write-in box (so the “Other Asian” and “Other Pacific Islander” response categories no longer share a write-in box), and excluded the “Some other race” response option.

This report examines the effect of the revised race and Hispanic origin questions on respondent behavior from both quantitative and qualitative standpoints. Quantitatively, we primarily looked at item nonresponse rates and response distributions. The qualitative analysis included behavior coding, an enumerator debriefing questionnaire, and enumerator debriefing sessions.

### Major Findings:

- Hispanic origin findings indicate that the minor changes in question wording and the addition of examples seem to work well. In comparison to the Census 2000 version, the revised Hispanic origin question demonstrated some positive changes in reporting. The revised question showed a decrease in item nonresponse (overall and by mode), a decrease in non-specific Hispanic origin reporting, and a decrease in the reporting of two or more origins. These findings are consistent with results of the 2003 National Census Test, which evaluated the effects of adding examples and making other changes to the version of the Hispanic origin item that was used in Census 2000 (Martin et al., 2003; Sheppard et al., 2004).
- Eliminating the “Some other race” response option in the race question on the paper form showed a substantial reduction in “Some other race” classification among Hispanic mail respondents. However, at the same time, there was a considerable increase in item nonresponse to race among Hispanic mail respondents. Among all mail respondents we

saw a substantial decrease in “Some other race” classification, for the cost of a small overall increase in race item nonresponse in the mail mode.

- Eliminating the “Some other race” response option in the Nonresponse Followup instrument was inconclusive, due to the inclusion of the “Other Responses” checkbox and write-in field on the race screen. The checkbox was not considered a race category, and the data captured in that field were not used as part of the race coding process. Though race item nonresponse rates were high in Nonresponse Followup, an investigation of the types of responses captured in “Other Responses” revealed that a good proportion of those who were considered race nonrespondents had attempted to give a response to the race question. Thus, this checkbox effectively served the same purpose as “Some other race” from the standpoint of an enumerator. The use of the “Other Responses” checkbox suggests that enumerators do look for ways to report respondents as races other than the races that are listed as response options.
- Qualitatively, the research reaffirmed our current knowledge regarding Hispanic origin and race. That is, Hispanics, more than other respondents, do not interpret the concepts of race and Hispanic origin as we intend them, and therefore have difficulty answering both questions. As a result, enumerators often experience difficulty obtaining appropriate answers to these questions. Behavior coding results showed that enumerators often skipped or reworded the race and Hispanic origin questions, perhaps in an effort to avoid the difficulty of obtaining appropriate responses. There was also evidence from enumerator debriefings that enumerators sometimes faced negative reactions from respondents when administering the revised race and Hispanic origin questions.

### **Recommendations:**

- Continue testing ways to best collect data on race and Hispanic origin in the census. Regardless of the findings in this report, the Census Bureau received guidance provided by the 2005 Omnibus Appropriations Bill that questionnaires for all future 2010 Census tests, and for the 2010 Census, shall include “Some other race” as a race response option.
- Research new methods of collecting census data on the handheld computer. The evaluation shows that the implementation of the “Other Responses” checkbox did not work well. Although it won’t be implemented again given the current guidance, the results should be carefully considered during future planning. In addition, in light of the behavior coding findings that enumerators frequently skipped or reworded the race and Hispanic origin questions, we may find that a topic-based administration of the person level census questions is beneficial.
- Explore cognitive research as a means of collecting valuable data on negative reactions to Hispanic origin and race.



# **1. BACKGROUND**

## **1.1 Purpose of Study**

The 2004 Census Test was designed to evaluate major methodological and operational improvements under consideration for the 2010 Census, and was the first site test to be conducted in preparation for the 2010 Census. The 2004 test sites were selected because they contained the demographic characteristics associated with specific test objectives and supported key research questions and evaluation requirements. The 2004 Census Test sites were Colquitt, Thomas and Tift counties in Georgia and a portion of northwestern Queens County in New York. The results of the 2004 Census Test are not intended to provide results that can be generalized to the entire nation. Rather, they can inform us about the feasibility and/or effectiveness of the new or refined methodology. (See Appendix A for an overview of the 2004 Census Test.)

This report addresses new questionnaire content for the 2004 Census Test. Specifically, it assesses revisions to the Hispanic origin and race questions. The revised Hispanic origin question incorporated minor wording changes in the question stem and the addition of examples for the “Another Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin” response category. The revised race question added examples for the “Other Asian” and “Other Pacific Islander” response categories, added a write-in box (so the “Other Asian” and “Other Pacific Islander” response categories no longer share a write-in box), and excluded the “Some other race” response option. (See Appendix B for the Hispanic origin and race questions from Census 2000 and the 2004 Census Test.)

## **1.2 Previous Research**

In 1977, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued the “Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting” in response to federal government requirements associated with the collection of race and Hispanic data. After a comprehensive review, OMB issued revised standards in 1997 due to an increase in racial and ethnic diversity in the United States. The revised standards included the identification of five racial categories, changes in racial terminology, changes in the sequencing of questions on race and Hispanic origin, and the addition of an instruction for respondents to mark one or more races. The Census Bureau has researched ways to increase reporting in the five OMB categories, as well as ways to distinguish the concepts of race and Hispanic origin. In the 2003 National Census Test, the Census Bureau tested a version of the race question that dropped the “Some other race” category, in hopes of reducing the number of race responses that would require imputing into one of the five major OMB categories. The results showed that dropping the “Some other race” category reduced, but did not eliminate “Some other race” reporting by Hispanics (Sheppard et al., 2004), and increased race nonresponse for Hispanics (Martin et al., 2003).

While these revised race and Hispanic origin questions were tested in a national mailout/mailback sample during the 2003 National Census Test, the 2004 Census Test was the first opportunity to test them in a field environment, which included a Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) operation. Thus, the 2004 Census Test provided an opportunity to examine the effect the revised content had on respondents' behavior in regards to completing their census form, and to assess respondent reaction to the revised questions using qualitative measures.

It should also be noted that during the 2004 Census Test, the Census Bureau used hand held computers (HHCs) to conduct personal visit and telephone interviews during the NRFU operation. In past censuses and census tests, enumerators conducted the NRFU interview using a paper questionnaire. The 2004 Census Test tested the feasibility of using HHCs to improve the efficiency of field data collection activities and data quality, while containing costs.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Research Questions**

The primary research question for this evaluation was:

*What is the effect of the revised race and Hispanic origin questions, including the removal of the "Some other race" option, on respondents?*

In the absence of a controlled experimental design, we could not fully address this question. However, the report does answer the following questions:

*What are the item nonresponse rates and other measures of response behavior for the revised questions?*

*How do the revised questions perform with the NRFU population?*

The primary goal was to understand how the revised race and Hispanic origin questions affect reporting as indicated by item nonresponse rates, response distributions, as well as the effect on response behavior as indicated by qualitative data.

## 2.2 Data Sources

### 2.2.1 Quantitative Metrics

To quantitatively assess the research questions, we computed item nonresponse rates and response distributions for the mail and NRFU populations and compared them to data from the same tracts in Census 2000. We also looked at the percent classified as “Some other race” (from the race write-ins), overall and by Hispanic origin. Lastly, we looked at changes since Census 2000 in detailed Hispanic origin reporting.

Since a complete enumeration occurred in each site, the data are not subject to sampling error. Therefore, this analysis does not include statistical testing for differences. Rather, we looked for differences in practical terms. As stated above, the quantitative analysis in this report compares 2004 test data with Census 2000 data from the same census tracts. To ensure an appropriate comparison, both universes were subsetting to contain only:

- Short form mail returns from mailout/mailback and update/leave areas
- Short form enumerator returns
- Non-Duplicate, Data defined persons
- Persons 1-6 for mail returns, all persons from NRFU returns

Edited race and Hispanic origin data were used for this analysis. Thus, keep in mind that respondents ultimately classified as “Some other race” may have been classified that way based on their response to Hispanic origin or race, and not necessarily because they selected the “Some other race” checkbox. In addition, the goal of this evaluation is to assess the effect of the revised questions on respondent behavior, therefore we only analyzed non-imputed data on race and Hispanic origin. For example, when analyzing race distributions, we only present data that were as reported or that could be determined from a response to the question on Hispanic origin. Likewise, when analyzing item nonresponse, imputed data were considered nonresponse.

### 2.2.2 Qualitative Research

#### *Behavior Coding*

A sample of NRFU personal visit interviews were audio taped and behavior coded as an additional method for addressing the research questions. The behavior coding operation was conducted to collect data regarding respondents’ verbal reaction to the race and Hispanic origin questions, as well as data on interviewer implementation and behavior. The operation was restricted to the Queens, NY site to ensure a reasonable number of Hispanics in the sample. Both English and Spanish-speaking households were included in the study. Housing units for behavior coding were not selected randomly, but rather interviews were conducted based on enumerator workloads in designated crew leader districts. Selected telephone interviewers at the

Census Bureau's Tucson Telephone Center conducted the behavior coding. Coders were selected based on their fluency in speaking and reading both English and Spanish, as well as their reliability as interviewers as determined by their supervisors. Coders attended a three-day behavior coding training session.

### *NRFU Feedback Questionnaire (NFQ)*

In June of 2004, a questionnaire was administered to enumerators and crew leaders who worked during the 2004 Census Test NRFU operation, to elicit feedback on the operation. This debriefing questionnaire included three questions specific to the implementation of the revised race and Hispanic origin questions.

### *Enumerator Debriefings*

Enumerator debriefing sessions were conducted in the two sites during the months of June and July 2004. Results from these debriefings provide feedback based on the NRFU enumerator's direct contact with respondents.

## **2.3 Calculation of item nonresponse rates**

Item nonresponse rates were computed as an indicator of data quality. Item nonresponse refers to the percentage of records with missing data for a particular item. The analysis was restricted to non-blank<sup>1</sup>, primary returns<sup>2</sup> for a housing unit. The item nonresponse rates were calculated according to the following definition:

$$\text{Item nonresponse rate} = \frac{\text{\# of records with missing data for a particular item}}{\text{total number of non-blank primary return records}} * 100\%$$

## **2.4 Quality Assurance Procedures**

Quality assurance procedures were applied to the analysis and preparation of this report. The procedures encompassed data processing, data verification, factual content, technical writing, relevance, technical review and clearance, as appropriate. A description of the procedures used is provided in the "Handbook for the Quality Process for 2010 Census Test Evaluations".

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<sup>1</sup> In general, a non-blank return was defined as a return that contained valid responses for the household popcount and tenure questions OR contained at least one data defined person record. For more details on this definition, see U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2004b, *Defining Blank Forms in the 2004 Census Test – Revision 1*, Population Division Memorandum, April 9, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Details of the process for selecting primary returns in the 2004 Census Test are Census Confidential.

### 3. LIMITATIONS

- Results cannot be generalized to the national level.
- Real population changes between Census 2000 and the 2004 Census Test are likely to have occurred, however the extent is unknown. Therefore, we are unable to measure the impact of population changes on our results.
- A higher percentage of Hispanics responded by mail in 2000 than in 2004 (see Table 6 and Table 9). Thus the group that responded by mail was more Hispanic in 2000 than in 2004. Likewise, the group that responded in NRFU was less Hispanic in 2000 than in 2004. This compositional difference confounds mode comparisons in this report.
- There are differences in how the 2004 data were processed versus the Census 2000 data. For example, the Primary Selection Algorithm used for the 2004 Census Test was a much simpler approach than what was done in Census 2000.

### 4. RESULTS

#### 4.1 Response by mode

Table 1 shows the overall response distribution for both test sites. In New York, over 49 percent of responses in 2004 were obtained by mail. In Georgia, about 59 percent of responses in 2004 were obtained by mail. For the same universe in Census 2000, nearly 67 percent of responses were received by mail in New York, and over 73 percent in Georgia. Note that test censuses typically experience relatively lower response rates, and the lower mail response in 2004 is likely due to the lack of a real census environment (e.g., not as much publicity/exposure). In both Census 2000 and the 2004 Census Test, the vast majority of NRFU interviews were conducted by personal visit.

**Table 1. Overall Response by Mode and Site (Household Level)**

	2000		2004 <sup>3</sup>	
	New York	Georgia	New York	Georgia
<b>Mail</b>	66.90%	73.29%	49.36%	59.18%
<b>NRFU</b>	33.10%	26.71%	50.64%	40.82%

Census 2000 rates reported in Table 1 are limited to short form returns for the tracts included in the 2004 test and are similar to reported national rates for Census 2000 (69.1 percent mail

response rate for short forms<sup>3</sup>). The New York mail response rate for Census 2000 (66.90 percent) is lower than the national rate, as would be expected for an urban area. The Census 2000 mail response rate for the Georgia site (73.29 percent) is greater than the national rate, as would be expected for a more rural area.

## 4.2 Item Nonresponse Rates and Response Distributions

### 4.2.1 Item Nonresponse in New York

#### *Hispanic origin*

Table 2 shows item nonresponse to Hispanic origin, overall and by mode for the New York site.

**Table 2. New York – Item Nonresponse to Hispanic Origin, Overall and by Mode**

Mode	Census 2000	2004 Census Test	Difference
<b>Overall</b>	4.81%	3.17%	-1.64
<b>Mail</b>	5.60%	4.75%	-0.85
<b>NRFU</b>	3.42%	1.94%	-1.48

In terms of item nonresponse to Hispanic origin in New York, we see a decrease in 2004 when compared to 2000, overall and for both modes. Overall in New York, item nonresponse for Hispanic origin decreased by 1.64 percentage points (from 4.81 percent in 2000 to 3.17 percent in 2004). These gains in response are likely due to wording changes and the addition of examples in the 2004 Hispanic origin question. The results are consistent with the findings from the 2003 National Census Test, which also evaluated the effects of adding examples and wording changes to the version of the Hispanic origin item that was used in Census 2000 (Martin et al., 2003; Sheppard et al., 2004).

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census 2000 Mail Response Rates*, 2003.

## Race

Table 3 shows item nonresponse to race overall, by mode, and by Hispanic origin for the New York site.

**Table 3. New York – Item Nonresponse to Race, Overall and by Hispanic Origin**

Mode	Hispanic Origin	Census 2000	2004 Census Test	Difference
<b>Overall</b>	<b>Overall</b>	7.09%	17.42%	10.33
	<b>Hispanic</b>	12.33%	30.90%	18.57
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	1.09%	3.87%	2.78
<b>Mail</b>	<b>Overall</b>	8.93%	9.97%	1.04
	<b>Hispanic</b>	15.84%	23.17%	7.33
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	1.16%	1.42%	0.26
<b>NRFU</b>	<b>Overall</b>	3.83%	23.18%	19.35
	<b>Hispanic</b>	5.40%	34.85%	29.45
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	0.98%	6.45%	5.47

We see increases in item nonresponse to race among Hispanics for both modes in 2004 compared to 2000. Among Hispanic mail respondents, the increase was over seven percentage points (15.84 percent in 2000 to 23.17 percent in 2004). Other research has shown that Hispanic respondents have trouble identifying with census race categories, and are often classified as “Some other race” (Bates et al., 1995, Stapleton et al., 1999). With the removal of the “Some other race” category in 2004, Hispanic mail respondents may be less likely to respond to race.

Among Hispanic NRFU respondents, the increase in item nonresponse to race was even larger -- over 29 percentage points (5.40 percent in 2000 to 34.85 percent in 2004). We believe that this substantial increase in item nonresponse to race for NRFU can be explained by the way the race question was implemented on the HHC. That is, in addition to the 14 race categories seen on paper, the HHC included one added category, “Other Responses” (see Appendix C for an image of the race question on the HHC). When a person’s reported race was not one of the races listed, enumerators were instructed to select the “Other Responses” checkbox and enter the given response. Though enumerators were instructed to try to avoid selecting the “Other Responses” checkbox, they were also instructed to accept the respondent’s answer, and to not select race based on observation. Note that the “Other Responses” category did not appear on the respondent flashcard.

It is very important to note that the “Other Responses” category was not treated as an official category during data processing, and therefore responses recorded in this field were not used as part of race coding. Instead, “Other Responses” to race were treated as nonresponse. Thus, the

dramatic increase in item nonresponse to race among Hispanics in NRFU is likely related to the high percentage of Hispanics in New York, combined with the tendency for Hispanics to report a race that ultimately gets classified as “Some other race”.

As is shown later in this report (Table 6), the percent of Hispanics in the NRFU population was much higher in 2004 than in 2000. This compositional difference may contribute to the levels of item nonresponse to race among Hispanic NRFU respondents in 2004. Note that, in both 2000 and 2004, item nonresponse to race was highest in the mode that had the most Hispanic respondents. Thus, we believe it is likely that both the shift in Hispanics from mail to NRFU (from 2000 to 2004) and the poor implementation of removing the “Some other race” category in the 2004 NRFU instrument contributed to the level of item nonresponse to race among Hispanics in NRFU.

Among non-Hispanics, mail item nonresponse rates for race showed a small increase (1.16 percent in 2000 to 1.42 percent in 2004). However, for NRFU, we see an increase of over five percentage points in item nonresponse (0.98 percent to 6.45 percent). Although non-Hispanics are less likely to be classified as “Some other race”, the availability of the “Other Responses” checkbox in the NRFU instrument may have contributed to this difference.

#### 4.2.2 Item Nonresponse in Georgia

##### *Hispanic origin*

Table 4 shows item nonresponse to Hispanic origin overall and by mode for the Georgia site.

**Table 4. Georgia – Item Nonresponse to Hispanic Origin, Overall and by Mode**

Mode	Census 2000	2004 Census Test	Difference
<b>Overall</b>	4.89%	2.90%	-1.99
<b>Mail</b>	6.16%	4.65%	-1.51
<b>NRFU</b>	1.57%	0.65%	-0.92

Item nonresponse to Hispanic origin in Georgia decreased from 2000 to 2004, overall and by mode. Overall item nonresponse to Hispanic origin decreased by two percentage points in Georgia (from 4.89 percent in 2000 to 2.90 percent in 2004). As in New York, these gains in response are likely due to wording changes and the addition of examples in the 2004 Hispanic origin question, and are consistent with findings from the 2003 National Census Test (Martin et al., 2003; Sheppard et al., 2004).



## Race

Table 5 shows item nonresponse to race overall, by mode, and by Hispanic origin for the Georgia site.

**Table 5. Georgia – Item Nonresponse to Race, Overall and by Hispanic Origin**

Mode	Hispanic Origin	Census 2000	2004 Census Test	Difference
Overall	Overall	1.79%	3.92%	2.13
	Hispanic	13.54%	44.05%	30.51
	Non-Hispanic	0.51%	0.68%	0.17
Mail	Overall	1.88%	2.27%	0.39
	Hispanic	23.62%	36.94%	13.32
	Non-Hispanic	0.63%	0.82%	0.19
NRFU	Overall	1.56%	6.04%	4.48
	Hispanic	4.31%	46.32%	42.01
	Non-Hispanic	0.21%	0.50%	0.29

As we might expect based on the findings in New York, we see increases in item nonresponse to race among Hispanics in Georgia for both modes, when comparing 2004 data to 2000 data. Among Hispanic mail respondents, the increase was over 13 percentage points (from 23.62 percent to 36.94 percent). Among Hispanic NRFU respondents, the increase was even more substantial --about 42 percentage points (from 4.31 percent in 2000 to 46.32 percent in 2004). Again, we believe the availability of the “Other Responses” checkbox is what drives this dramatic rise. That is, Hispanic respondents were essentially allowed to report “Some other race” with the NRFU instrument, but since those data were not used in race coding, it appears as item nonresponse. Among non-Hispanics, both mail and NRFU item nonresponse rates showed small increases in 2004 versus 2000.

Again, note that real population differences, as well as compositional differences in Hispanic origin reporting from 2000 to 2004 may contribute to the differences found here.

#### 4.2.3 Response Distributions in New York

##### *Hispanic Origin*

Table 6 shows the distribution of Hispanic origin overall and by mode for the New York site.

**Table 6. New York – Response Distributions for Hispanic Origin\***

	Census 2000			2004 Census Test		
	Overall	Mail	NRFU	Overall	Mail	NRFU
<b>Hispanic</b>	48.14%	50.30%	44.38%	47.97%	37.76%	55.65%
<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	51.86%	49.70%	55.62%	52.03%	62.24%	44.35%

\* Note that shifts in item nonresponse between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to differences in response distributions.

Overall, in New York there were essentially no differences in the proportion of respondents reporting that they were of Hispanic origin (48.14 percent in 2000 versus 47.97 percent in 2004). However, note that a smaller proportion of Hispanics responded by mail in 2004 versus 2000. Thus, any within-mode comparisons are confounded by this compositional difference, and caution should be used when interpreting the following results.

##### *Race*

Table 7 shows the distribution of race overall and by mode for the New York site.

**Table 7. New York – Response Distributions for Race\***

Race	Census 2000			2004 Census Test		
	Overall	Mail	NRFU	Overall	Mail	NRFU
<b>White</b>	43.92%	47.07%	38.61%	58.10%	55.36%	60.59%
<b>Black</b>	8.97%	8.87%	9.13%	9.93%	9.49%	10.32%
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native</b>	0.65%	0.88%	0.26%	0.85%	0.76%	0.93%
<b>Asian</b>	19.99%	18.26%	22.92%	24.93%	24.61%	25.23%
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</b>	0.06%	0.04%	0.09%	0.08%	0.03%	0.12%
<b>Two or More Races</b>	7.30%	6.30%	8.97%	2.96%	3.49%	2.49%
<b>Some Other Race</b>	19.11%	18.57%	20.03%	3.15%	6.25%	0.33%

\* Note that shifts in item nonresponse between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to differences in response distributions.

Recall that for the 2004 Census Test, the “Some other race” category was not a response option, but rather, it was assigned during the editing process. Table 7 shows an overall decrease of about 16 percentage points in the “Some other race” category when the “Some other race” response option is removed (from 19.11 percent in 2000 to 3.15 percent in 2004). Classification as “Some other race” is not completely eliminated, since some respondents may still provide a response that is ultimately coded to “Some other race” (e.g. writing “Puerto Rican” in the “Other Asian” write-in box). As mentioned previously, some Hispanics have typically had trouble identifying with census race categories, and are often classified as “Some other race”. Thus, the high proportion of Hispanics in the New York site is likely to contribute to the magnitude of these results.

We see a substantial decrease from 2000 to 2004 in “Some other race” for both mail and NRFU cases. The reduction is less extreme for mail respondents, since they can easily use another write-in box (belonging to “Other Asian,” for example) to write in a race that would ultimately be coded to the “Some other race” category. However, in NRFU, we see that “Some other race” classification disappears almost completely (20.03 percent in 2000 compared to 0.33 percent in 2004). We believe this to be a function of the “Other Responses” category in NRFU. Although enumerators were told to try to avoid selecting the “Other Responses” category, they were instructed to select it when the respondent’s race was not one of the races listed. (See Appendix C for an excerpt of instructions from the 2004 Enumerator Training Manual.) Recall, however, that the “Other Responses” category was not treated as an official category during data processing, and therefore was not used as part of race coding. Instead, “Other Responses” to race were treated as nonresponse. Consequently, in 2004 NRFU, respondents could only be classified as “Some other race” if the enumerator selected another category with a write-in, such as “Other Asian”, and then entered in something that would ultimately code to “Some other race” (such as Puerto Rican). Given the very low percentage of NRFU respondents classified as “Some other race” in 2004, we know this did not happen very often.

We also see a decrease in the percentage of respondents reporting two or more races, overall and by mode. In 2000, if a respondent reported “White” and “Some other race”, they would be recorded as reporting two or more races. In 2004, with the removal of the “Some other race” response option, the same respondent may have just reported “White” in the mail mode. Moreover, in 2004 NRFU, if an enumerator selected “White” and also selected “Other Responses”, the response was only coded as “White,” since the “Other Responses” write-ins were not coded as races.

Naturally, we also see an effect on the rest of the categories in the race distribution, when eliminating the “Some other race” response option. We see the largest impact on the “White” and “Asian” categories. That is, “White” reporting increased over 14 percentage points and “Asian” reporting increased about five percentage points, in comparison to 2000 data.

Note there are several limitations to keep in mind when interpreting these results. That is, the race response distribution may be impacted by real changes in the population between 2000 and 2004 as well as the shifts in item nonresponse that we saw in Section 4.2.1. Lastly, the race distributions in Table 7 are confounded by the smaller proportion of Hispanic mail respondents in 2004. That is, mail respondents are less Hispanic, and NRFU respondents are more Hispanic, in 2004 than in 2000. This compositional difference is likely to contribute to the decline in “Some other race” for mail respondents from 2000 to 2004. That is, proportionately more mail respondents in 2000 were Hispanic, and we know that Hispanics are more often classified as “Some other race”. Thus, even if there were no differences in the questions between in 2000 and 2004, and no changes in the population, we would still see a decline in “Some other race” from 2000 to 2004 among mail respondents.

#### 4.2.4 “Some other race” classification by Hispanic origin for New York

Given the sizable Hispanic population in the New York site, this section takes a closer look at “Some other race” classification by Hispanic origin. Table 8 shows “Some other race” classification by Hispanic origin.

**Table 8. New York – Percent of Some Other Race by Hispanic Origin and Mode**

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Hispanic Origin</b>	<b>Census 2000</b>	<b>2004 Census Test</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	42.08%	7.16%	-34.92
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	1.58%	0.59%	-0.99
<b>Mail</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	41.17%	18.85%	-22.32
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	0.82%	0.67%	-0.15
<b>NRFU</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	43.69%	0.13%	-43.56
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	2.76%	0.51%	-2.25

Among Hispanics, we see a decline in “Some other race” from 2000 to 2004. In the mail mode, we see a reduction of over 22 percentage points (41.17 percent in 2000 to 18.85 percent in 2004) among Hispanics classified as “Some other race”. That is, a good proportion of Hispanic mail respondents became nonrespondents to race. And, as expected, an even larger reduction is seen for the Hispanic NRFU population – a drop of over 43 percentage points (43.69 percent to 0.13 percent). Given the tendency for Hispanics be classified as “Some other race,” it is no surprise to see such a dramatic drop among Hispanics when the “Some other race” category is removed. Though they may have provided a response to race that was recorded under “Other Responses”, such a response was not coded, and is ultimately considered nonresponse.

In the mail mode, we see a small change in non-Hispanics classified as “Some other race” (0.82 percent to 0.67 percent). For non-Hispanics classified as “Some other race” in NRFU, we see over a two percentage point reduction (2.76 percent to 0.51 percent).

Recall that these results are limited by the potential for real change to have occurred between 2000 and 2004. In addition, differences in the Hispanic makeup of the populations between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to these findings.

#### 4.2.5 Response distributions in Georgia

##### *Hispanic Origin*

Table 9 shows the distribution of Hispanic origin overall and by mode for the Georgia site.

**Table 9. Georgia – Response Distributions for Hispanic Origin \***

	Census 2000			2004 Census Test		
	Overall	Mail	NRFU	Overall	Mail	NRFU
<b>Hispanic</b>	5.70%	3.82%	10.41%	6.57%	2.89%	11.11%
<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	94.30%	96.18%	89.59%	93.43%	97.11%	88.89%

*\* Note that shifts in item nonresponse between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to differences in response distributions.*

Overall, in Georgia there was a difference in the proportion of respondents reporting that they were of Hispanic origin (5.70 percent in 2000 versus 6.57 percent in 2004). While this may be due to revisions to the Hispanic origin question, it's also possible that real changes in the population may have contributed to this effect. Given the change in the proportion of Hispanic mail respondents from 2000 to 2004, within-mode comparisons may be confounded and caution should be used when interpreting the following results.

## Race

Table 10 shows the distribution of race, overall and by mode for the Georgia site.

**Table 10. Georgia – Response Distributions for Race\***

Race	Census 2000			2004 Census Test		
	Overall	Mail	NRFU	Overall	Mail	NRFU
<b>White</b>	65.44%	70.76%	51.55%	67.57%	74.41%	58.46%
<b>Black</b>	30.16%	26.15%	40.60%	30.20%	23.71%	38.86%
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native</b>	0.27%	0.31%	0.18%	0.51%	0.30%	0.78%
<b>Asian</b>	0.53%	0.44%	0.77%	0.59%	0.47%	0.76%
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</b>	0.04%	0.03%	0.07%	0.08%	**	0.16%
<b>Two or More Races</b>	0.88%	0.88%	0.88%	0.80%	0.70%	0.95%
<b>Some Other Race</b>	2.68%	1.43%	5.94%	0.24%	0.40%	0.03%

\* Note that shifts in item nonresponse between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to differences in response distributions.

\*\* Estimate withheld due to insufficient cell size ( $n < 10$ ).

Similar to the New York site, we see an overall decrease in the proportion classified as “Some other race”. Overall, “Some other race” decreased by over two percentage points – from 2.68 percent in 2000 to 0.24 percent in 2004. For mail responses, the reduction was about one percentage point and for NRFU, almost six percentage points. The results are less dramatic for Georgia due to a much smaller proportion of Hispanics in that site. In addition, we see an increase in White reporting overall and by mode, when eliminating the “Some other race” category. As a result of the larger reduction in “Some other race” for the NRFU population, we see a more substantial increase in White reporting for the NRFU population versus the mail population. We see a decrease in the reporting of two or more races when the “Some other race” category is removed, but on a much smaller scale than in the New York site. This is likely due to the less diverse nature of the Georgia site (as observed in Census 2000, 0.88 percent of the short form population reported two or more races). Again, note that real population differences, shifts in item nonresponse, and differences in Hispanic origin reporting from 2000 to 2004 may contribute to the differences found here.

### 4.3 Informal analysis of “Other Responses” in NRFU

Although it’s difficult to speculate on how the race results for NRFU may have differed had the “Other Responses” checkbox not been present, the item nonresponse and response distribution findings prompted an informal analysis of the types of respondents that gave “Other Responses”. In addition, we looked at the types of responses given by those respondents. On the HHC, the write-in area associated with the “Other Responses” checkbox was called race comments. Results associated with the race comments field are presented in this section. Note that NRFU output data do not indicate when an enumerator marked the “Other Responses” checkbox with no accompanying write-in entry. Thus, this section only assesses “Other Responses” with an associated write-in in the race comments field.

#### 4.3.1 Distribution of non-blank entries in the race comments field

Table 11 shows the rate of non-blank entries in the race comments field overall, by Hispanic origin and by race, across the two sites. In New York, nearly 20 percent of person records had a non-blank entry in the race comments field. In Georgia, 5.5 percent of the person records had a non-blank entry in the race comments field.

**Table 11. Percent of person records with non-blank entries in the race comments field**

	New York	Georgia
<b>Overall</b>	19.6%	5.5%
<b>By Hispanic Origin</b>		
Hispanic	30.2%	46.5%
Non-Hispanic	6.8%	8.3%
Missing Hispanic	7.1%	0.3%
<b>By Race</b>		
White	1.9%	0.3%
Black	1.2%	0.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	3.7%	4.2%
Asian	0.8%	2.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	5.6%	4.3%
Two or more races	3.1%	0.7%
Some other race	45.6%	50.0%
Missing race	78.6%	87.5%

In both sites, a higher proportion of Hispanics had a non-blank race comment, (30.2 percent in New York and 46.5 percent for Georgia) versus non-Hispanics (6.8 percent in New York and 8.3 percent in Georgia). This is not surprising, given the tendency for some Hispanics to report a Hispanic origin for race, ultimately classifying them as “Some other race”. In New York, 7.1

percent of those who did not respond to Hispanic origin had a non-blank race comment. Perhaps these are respondents who had a more difficult time with the concept of both race and Hispanic origin, or enumerators who are unsure how to classify a given response.

In New York, over 45 percent of those classified as “Some other race” had a non-blank race comment, and in Georgia, 50 percent of those classified as “Some other race” had a non-blank race comment (note that over 80 percent of these came from non-Hispanic respondents). In New York, 78.6 percent of those with a missing race had a non-blank race comment, and 87.5 percent of those with missing race in Georgia had a non-blank race comment. That is, the majority of those who were considered nonrespondents to race had made some kind of effort to provide a response. However, those responses were not considered to be valid responses during the coding process.

#### 4.3.2 Types of entries in the race comments field

Next, we looked at the rate of item nonresponse to race among those respondents with a non-blank race comment. In New York, 93 percent of those with a non-blank race comment were missing race. In Georgia, 95 percent were missing race. This is evidence that enumerators were using the “Other Responses” checkbox and associated write-in box in the same manner as a “Some other race” response option. To further confirm that, we took an in-depth look at the types of responses recorded in the race comments field for each site. Please note that the following analysis is a rough estimation of the content of the write-ins in the race comments field. It is not meant to be an exact interpretation of those write-ins.

In New York, about 52 percent of entries in the race comments field were non-specific Hispanic origins such as “Spanish”, “Hispanic” or “Latino”. Other specific Hispanic groups, such as Puerto Rican, Cuban or Dominican made up another three percent of responses. “Mestizo” was reported about five percent of the time and “Trigueno” about 1.4 percent of the time. About four percent of the race comments in were some form of the word “Mexican,” and South American groups (e.g. Ecuadorian, Brazilian, Colombian, and Peruvian) were found in about 4.5 percent of responses. Responses of “American,” “Human,” or “Person” occurred in almost six percent of the responses. Other notable responses in New York included “White,” “Indian,” “Egyptian,” and “Mixture”.

In Georgia, almost half of the race comments were some form of the word “Mexican”. About 34 percent of responses were “Hispanic” and another three percent of responses were “Spanish” or “Latino”. “White” or “Caucasian” were reported about 2.7 percent of the time, and “American” or “Human” were reported over two percent of the time.



#### 4.3.3 Estimated impact of race comments on item nonresponse and response distributions

Using the data from the New York site, we made some rough estimates to assess how these findings would have affected item nonresponse to race had the “Other Responses” actually been treated as valid responses (like “Some other race” in 2000). Again, this analysis is not meant to be an exact estimation of the impact. Rather, this is an informal assessment of how the item nonresponse rates might have changed had the “Other Responses” category been treated as a race response category. The basic criteria/assumptions were as follows:

- NRFU item nonresponse to race in New York was 23.2 percent.
- From Table 11, 78.6 percent of those with a missing race in New York had a non-blank race note.
- We assume 90 percent of those with a missing race and a non-blank race note gave some type of race response in the race comments field (this is a slightly conservative estimate based on the types of responses observed in the race comments field).

Based on these criteria and assumptions, the adjusted NRFU item nonresponse rate for race in New York would be around 6.8 percent. This adjusted rate is just three percentage points higher than the item nonresponse for NRFU in 2000. Recall that we don’t know how often an enumerator might have selected “Other Responses” without providing a write-in entry. This phenomenon could also contribute to a further reduction in item nonresponse in the 2004 data, although we can’t estimate the extent.

Lastly, we investigated how the entries in the race comments field might have contributed to “Some other race” reporting, had they been coded and assigned in the race distribution. Additional criteria/assumptions were:

- “Some other race” classification in New York for NRFU cases is 0.33 percent.
- We assume 80 percent of the non-blank entries in the race comments field would ultimately be classified as “Some other race” (again, this is a conservative estimate based on the types of responses observed in the race comments field).

Given these criteria/assumptions, the adjusted “Some other race” NRFU rate would be about 16.2 percent, which is much more in line with the 2000 NRFU rate (about 20 percent).

Thus, while this study can’t tell us how the race question would have affected respondent behavior had there actually been no obvious place to capture “Some other race” responses in NRFU, this informal analysis implies that most of the increase in item nonresponse to race seen in 2004 as well as most of the decrease in “Some other race” classification in 2004 can be accounted for by the write-in entries associated with the “Other Responses” checkbox. That is, enumerators essentially used the “Other Responses” category in the same manner as a “Some other race” category.

#### 4.4 A closer look at Hispanic origin

Given the changes in the Hispanic origin question between 2000 and 2004, we took a look at changes in particular types of responses for both sites. Among Hispanics, we looked at shifts in the response distribution of the Hispanic origin question by the following types of responses:

- (1) Groups with check boxes: Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban
- (2) Groups listed as examples (in the 2004 form only): Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard
- (3) All other specific groups, without checkboxes and not listed as examples
- (4) Non-specific origins: Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino
- (5) Those who checked the “Another Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin” checkbox but did not provide a write-in entry
- (6) Those who gave two or more Hispanic responses -- by either marking more than one group-specific checkbox (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban), marking a group-specific checkbox and reporting a detailed group, or by reporting two or more detailed groups

Tables 12 and 13 present the distribution of these types of Hispanic origin reporting for both 2004 and 2000, overall and across modes. Recall that real population changes may have occurred between 2000 and 2004 and note that the compositional differences in Hispanic respondents within mode (see Table 6 and Table 9) confound these results.

**Table 12. A closer look at Hispanic origin reporting in New York**

	2000			2004		
	Overall	Mail	NRFU	Overall	Mail	NRFU
Checkbox groups	26.97%	21.71%	36.55%	29.19%	23.42%	31.98%
Example groups	32.32%	34.24%	28.83%	34.95%	42.41%	31.36%
Other specific groups	23.43%	20.03%	29.63%	31.22%	25.67%	33.89%
Non-specific origins	11.75%	17.01%	2.18%	0.64%	1.74%	0.11%
Other checkbox with no write-in	1.81%	2.24%	1.03%	0.82%	1.99%	0.25%
Two or more origins	3.71%	4.77%	1.78%	3.18%	4.77%	2.41%

Overall, specific origin reporting (a combination of estimates from the first three rows of Table 12: checkbox groups, example groups and other specific groups) increased from almost 83 percent in 2000 to over 95 percent in 2004. Although it may appear that the use of examples in 2004 contributed to an increase in reporting of those example groups, we can't attribute that increase to the use of those groups as examples per se. Rather, we see an increase in the reporting of specific groups, whether they were used as examples or not. That is, the results from Table 12 show better reporting of specific Hispanic origins in the 2004 questionnaire. This finding is consistent with the results of the 2003 National Census Test.

Reporting of non-specific origins (Spanish, Hispanic, and Latino) decreased substantially from 2000 to 2004. Reporting of two or more origins also decreased overall from 2000 to 2004, but increased among NRFU cases and stayed the same among mail returns. This phenomenon is a function of the shift in the overall response by mode. Recall from Table 1, we saw a decrease in mail response and an increase in NRFU response in 2004 compared with 2000. Likewise, at the person level, we observed that more persons were enumerated by NRFU in 2004 (67 percent) compared to 2000 (35 percent). Thus, the overall percent in 2004 is weighted more toward NRFU, while the overall percent in 2000 is weighted more toward mail. (See Appendix D for Table 12 cell sizes.)

Despite the limitations associated with these findings, we believe the use of examples and changes in question wording contribute, at least in part, to these results. These results are consistent with findings from the 2003 National Census Test (Martin, et al., 2003)

**Table 13. A closer look at Hispanic origin reporting in Georgia**

	2000			2004		
	Overall	Mail	NRFU	Overall	Mail	NRFU
Checkbox groups	84.92%	74.67%	93.81%	90.93%	82.13%	93.61%
Example groups	0.97%	1.55%	0.47%	1.96%	4.38%	1.22%
Other specific groups	2.64%	2.77%	2.52%	4.04%	3.08%	4.33%
Non-specific origins	5.09%	9.64%	1.14%	0.81%	2.68%	0.24%
Other checkbox with no write-in	0.25%	0.23%	0.28%	0.14%	0.46%	0.04%
Two or more origins	6.13%	11.14%	1.78%	2.13%	7.26%	0.56%

As was found in the New York site, specific origin reporting (a combination of estimates from the first three rows of Table 13: checkbox groups, example groups and other specific groups)

increased from around 88 percent in 2000 to almost 97 percent in 2004, overall. Reporting of non-specific origins and two or more origins decreased. Again, the use of examples and changes in question wording likely contribute to these results, however the previously stated limitations may confound these results.

## **4.5 Analysis of Qualitative Data**

### **4.5.1 Summary of behavior coding results**

A sample of NRFU personal visit interviews in the New York site were audio taped and behavior coded to collect data regarding respondents' verbal reaction to the race and Hispanic origin questions, as well as data on interviewer implementation and behavior. A total of 220 audio-taped interviews were obtained from this operation. Of these, 119 were conducted in English, and 101 were conducted in Spanish (fully or in part). Behavior coding data were analyzed for the administration of questions regarding all persons reported for the selected household. For a complete report on this behavior coding study see Hunter and Landreth, 2005. A brief summary of the behavior coding results for the Hispanic origin and race questions follows.

#### *Hispanic Origin*

Behavior coders were trained to assess responses based on whether or not the response met the measurement objective of the question. A conservative approach was taken for coding purposes. That is, for Hispanic origin, "Yes/no" responses were coded as 'adequate,' as well as non-specific responses taken straight from the origins in the question itself (e.g. Spanish). Adequate responses also included the more detailed origins available in the Hispanic origin follow-up screens on the HHC (e.g., Columbian, Mexican, etc.). Given these criteria, respondents gave inadequate responses to the Hispanic origin question 26 percent of the time it was asked. When responding inadequately, respondents generally gave answers that were races or non-Hispanic countries of origin.

In terms of interviewer behavior, interviewers asked the Hispanic origin question exactly as worded or with slight changes 33 percent of the time. Overall, the question was skipped about 21 percent of the time (three percent of the time for Person 1 and 27 percent of the time for later household members). The study found that the Hispanic origin question was both reworded and skipped more often for Persons 2 and higher than for Person 1 (as was true for all questions). Hunter and Landreth note that this may be an indication of the interviewer entering the same response for all persons in the household, either because the interviewer made that assumption, or the respondent told them to do so.

#### *Race*

Race was one of three questions that generated a sizable level of responses that failed to meet the measurement objective. The rate of inadequate answers to the race question was 36 percent. When looking at the final response outcome, the rate of inadequate answers decreased to 34 percent. Hunter and Landreth note this as an indication that the issue was unable to be resolved through respondent/interviewer interaction. Additionally, they indicate this may be due to a poor communication of concepts and/or an inability for respondents to respond within the parameters of the response set provided.

In over half of the cases where a respondent did not provide an adequate response, the respondent gave a Hispanic origin as a response to the race question. And, in most of these cases, the interviewer did not attempt to obtain an adequate response. However, an important note should be made regarding this finding. That is, during the Hispanic origin question in the NRFU interview, a respondent who indicated that they were of Hispanic origin, received up to two followup questions to gather their country of origin. Thus, it seems reasonable that a Hispanic respondent would have little else to tell the interviewer about their race or origin by the time they were asked the race question.

In terms of interviewer behavior, interviewers asked the race question exactly as worded or with slight changes 16 percent of the time. Table 14 shows the ways in which interviewers reworded or changed the race question when there was a major change in question wording.

**Table 14. Themes in Major Changes to Question Wording for Race as Documented in Behavior Coders' Notes**

<b>Interviewer Behavior</b>	<b>Percent of All Major Change</b>
"Do you consider (him/her/yourself)..."	33%
"Using this list, what would you consider..."	14%
Adding races not on list to question	14%
Asking single race only to respondent	14%
"Of what race..." or "Is the race..."	10%
Showed/read list only	7%
Asking for nationality	4%
Other	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Table excerpted from Hunter and Landreth, 2005

As Hunter and Landreth point out, it is most surprising to see that in 14 percent of the cases, the interviewer offered the respondent races that were not on the list of codeable races (e.g. Mestizo, Trigueno, Hispanic, or Latino). Hunter and Landreth suggest that this may be a reflection of the interviewers' attempt to overcome the problems that many Hispanic respondents have with the

race question. In addition, it appears that in some of the cases, the interviewer is omitting an important aspect of the race question, that is, the opportunity for the respondent to select more than one race.

The race question was skipped frequently, and for Persons 2 and higher, it was skipped almost half of the time. Hunter and Landreth point out that this may be an indication of the interviewer entering the same race for all persons in the household, either because the interviewer made that assumption, or the respondent told them to do so.

#### *Negative reactions to the questions on Hispanic origin and race*

A particular goal of this study was to evaluate the extent to which the revised Hispanic origin and race questions generated a negative reaction from respondents. Very few negative reactions were noted in this study. While it may be that the questions indeed produced few negative reactions, we should also recognize that the behavior coding method may not be suitable to reliably detect such a subjective measure. Recall that behavior coders must make judgment solely on verbal exchange, thus other potential indicators of negativity, such as body language or facial expressions, are absent. Therefore, the true level of anger or frustration with the Hispanic origin and race questions may not be accurately represented with this measure.

#### 4.5.2 NRFU Feedback Questionnaire (NFQ)

In June of 2004, a questionnaire was administered to enumerators and crew leaders who worked during the 2004 Census Test, to elicit feedback on the NRFU operation. The debriefing questionnaire included three questions specific to the implementation of the race and Hispanic origin questions.

In the New York site, the response rate to the NFQ was 78.34 percent. In Georgia, the response rate was 78.06 percent. Responses came from NRFU enumerators, crew leader assistants and crew leaders as well as reinterviewers, reinterview crew leader assistants and reinterview crew leaders.

The following results are limited to responses from enumerators, crew leader assistants and crew leaders who worked during NRFU. There were 519 NRFU enumerators in New York who responded to the NFQ, and 121 in Georgia. In New York, 64 NRFU crew leaders and crew leader assistants responded, while 25 responded in Georgia.

**Table 15. Did any respondents have a negative reaction to the Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin question?**

	<b>New York</b>	<b>Georgia</b>
<b>Yes</b>	44.84%	57.75%
<b>No</b>	54.63%	41.55%

Just under half of the enumerators and crew leaders who responded to the NFQ in the New York site reported that some respondents had a negative reaction to the Hispanic origin question (44.84 percent). Over half of the enumerators and crew leaders in the Georgia site reported negative reactions (57.75 percent).

**Table 16. Did any respondents have a negative reaction to the race question?**

	<b>New York</b>	<b>Georgia</b>
<b>Yes</b>	66.13%	52.82%
<b>No</b>	33.87%	47.18%

About two-thirds of the enumerators and crew leaders who responded to the NFQ in the New York site reported that some respondents had a negative reaction to the question on race (66.13 percent). Just over half of the enumerators and crew leaders in the Georgia site reported negative reactions (52.82 percent). It is unknown whether the level of negative reaction experienced with the race question in the 2004 Census Test is more or less than in previous censuses or tests.

**Table 17. Did any respondents report a race that was not one of the answer categories for the race question?**

	<b>New York</b>	<b>Georgia</b>
<b>Yes</b>	58.44%	31.21%
<b>No</b>	41.56%	68.09%

Over half of the enumerators and crew leaders who responded to the NFQ in the New York site indicated that some respondents reported a race that was not one of the answer categories for the race question (58.44 percent). About one third of the enumerators and crew leaders who responded to the NFQ in the Georgia site indicated that some respondents reported a race that was not one of the answer categories (31.21 percent). When asked to specify which additional races were reported by respondents, over half of all enumerators indicated that respondents reported a Hispanic origin for the question on race.

### 4.5.3 Enumerator Debriefings

In late June and early July of 2004, enumerator debriefing sessions were held with enumerators who worked during the NRFU operation. There were 15 participants in the New York enumerator debriefing and 21 participants in the Georgia debriefing. Enumerators were asked questions similar to those that appeared on the NFQ.

#### *New York*

Overall, respondent reaction to the Hispanic origin question in New York was good, although enumerators did note some negative reaction. For example, enumerators reported that other groups, such as Greeks and Italians wanted to select their origin as well. Some respondents were confused by the Hispanic origin questions, and enumerators noted that the Hispanic origin flashcard helped most of the time.

Enumerators in New York noted that some respondents reacted negatively to the race question, and some were confused. In particular, some Hispanics had trouble with choosing a race. When respondents reported a race that was not one of the answer categories, enumerators would check the “Other Responses” checkbox and type in the reported response. There was also some confusion amongst respondents about choosing more than one race. Enumerators noted that the race flashcard did not help much with those respondents who were confused.

#### *Georgia*

In Georgia, enumerators reported that the overall reaction to Hispanic origin was good, although some reported negative reactions. Enumerators reported that some respondents were offended by being singled out and were hesitant to give the government such information. In addition, some enumerators reported that respondents were confused when asked about both Hispanic origin and race. Flash cards did not help with confusion.

Enumerators in Georgia reported that they received sarcasm in reaction to the race question. Enumerators noted that some respondents were offended by the question, or of the use of the word “Negro” and some respondents were confused about choosing more than one race for a person. Enumerators said that the flashcard did help in some situations. Enumerators reported that some respondents reported a race that was not one of the answer categories, such as “bi-racial,” “mixed,” or “American”. When respondents had trouble selecting a race, enumerators reported that they selected “Other Responses” on the HHC and typed in the reported response.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The revised Hispanic origin question showed some positive changes in reporting, and a decrease



in item nonresponse, overall and by mode. The results showed better reporting of specific Hispanic origins in 2004. Non-specific Hispanic origin reporting decreased, as did reporting of two or more origins. As evidenced by these measures, the revised question seems to demonstrate that the minor changes in question wording and the addition of examples work well.

The quantitative research suggests that a substantial reduction in “Some other race” classification can be obtained among Hispanic mail respondents, when the “Some other race” response category is eliminated. However, at the same time, there was a sizable increase in item nonresponse to race among Hispanic mail respondents. Among all mail respondents we saw a substantial decrease in “Some other race” classification, for the cost of a small overall increase in race item nonresponse in the mail mode (one percentage point increase in New York and 0.4 percentage point increase in Georgia). “Some other race” responses appear to be redistributed into the “White” and “Asian” categories in New York, and into the “White” category in Georgia. We cannot draw definitive conclusions about the effect of omitting the “Some other race” response option on the NRFU instrument due to the inclusion of the “Other Responses” checkbox, which effectively served the same purpose as “Some other race” from the standpoint of an enumerator. However, the data suggest that enumerators still look for ways to report respondents as races other than the races listed.

Qualitatively, the research reaffirmed our current knowledge regarding Hispanic origin and race. That is, Hispanics, more than other respondents, do not interpret the concepts as we intend them, and therefore have difficulty answering both the Hispanic origin and race questions. As a result, enumerators often experience difficulty obtaining appropriate answers to these questions. Behavior coding results showed that enumerators often skipped or reworded the race and Hispanic origin questions, perhaps in an effort to avoid the difficulty of obtaining appropriate responses. In addition, evidence from enumerator debriefings showed that enumerators sometimes faced negative reactions from respondents when administering the revised race and Hispanic origin questions.

### **Recommendations:**

- Continue testing ways to best collect data on race and Hispanic origin in the census. Regardless of the findings in this report, the Census Bureau received guidance provided by the 2005 Omnibus Appropriations Bill that questionnaires for all future 2010 Census tests, and for the 2010 Census, shall include “Some other race” as a race response option.
- Research new methods of collecting census data on the handheld computer. The evaluation shows that the implementation of the “Other Responses” checkbox did not work well. Although it won’t be implemented again given the current guidance, the results should be carefully considered during future planning. In addition, in light of the behavior coding findings that enumerators frequently skipped or reworded the race and Hispanic origin questions, we may find that a topic-based administration of the person

level census questions is beneficial.

- Explore cognitive research as a means of collecting valuable data on negative reactions to Hispanic origin and race.

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## 2004 Census Test Overview

The 2004 Census Test was the first site test to be conducted in preparation for the 2010 Census. This test was designed to evaluate major methodological and operational improvements under consideration for the 2010 Census, such as the use of hand held computers (HHCs) to support field work. The 2004 Census Test objectives were

1. **Hand Held Computers (HHCs) for Field Work** - Develop methods for implementing an HHC system during Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) operation.
2. **Coverage Improvement** - Develop new methods for improving coverage, including procedures to address overall coverage of the population and housing, and procedures to address unduplication issues.
3. **Questionnaire Content** - Gain insight on respondent reaction to the new race and Hispanic origin questions, including the removal of the “Some Other Race” option.
4. **Special Place/Group Quarters** - Develop improved definitions and methods for distinguishing between group quarters and housing units during census operations, updating the MAF in a comprehensive, integrated manner.

The results from this test will allow us to begin to specify the detailed methodological improvements for the 2010 Census. As in Census 2000, Census Day for the 2004 Census Test was April 1, 2004.

### Site Selection

The 2004 Census Test was conducted in Colquitt, Thomas and Tift Counties in Georgia and portions of northwestern Queens County in New York. The Queens neighborhoods were Astoria, Long Island City, Jackson Heights, Woodside (part), Elmhurst, East Elmhurst and Corona.

The following table provides a demographic overview of the sites chosen for the 2004 Census Test.

	<b>New York Test Site (Northwestern Queens County)</b>	<b>Georgia Test Sites (Colquitt, Thomas, and Tift Counties)</b>
Housing Units	151,239	51,250
Population Estimate	442,911	123,847

The Georgia test site was selected primarily because it is a rural, racially mixed area which contains a mixture of house number/street name and rural route and box number addresses.

The northwestern Queens County, New York site was selected primarily because it is an urban, hard to enumerate area, with a diverse racial and ethnic population that speaks many languages. This site also has a substantial Spanish-speaking population.

Both sites have characteristics which support our objectives of evaluating the use of HHCs for followup operations, new coverage improvement probes and residence rules for determining household composition, revised methods for controlling housing unit and person duplication, revised questions for obtaining race and ethnic origin data, and revised methods for constructing the special place/group quarters inventory.

### **Mailout/Mailback and Update /Leave**

Two questionnaire delivery methodologies were used in the 2004 Census Test. The mailout/mailback (MO/MB) methodology involved delivery of questionnaires by the United States Postal Service. The mail strategy involved delivering the following:

- an advance letter from February 24-26, 2004,
- an initial questionnaire from March 8-10, 2004,
- a reminder card from March 22-24, 2004, and
- a targeted replacement questionnaire, which was mailed to addresses for which we had not received a response with the initial questionnaires from April 8-10, 2004.

Both test sites used the MO/MB methodology in urban areas with city style (house number/street name) addresses. The Update/Leave (U/L) operation was conducted from March 1-31, 2004. The update/leave methodology involved Census Bureau enumerators delivering the questionnaire at the same time they updated the maps and the address list. The mail strategy involved delivery of an advance letter and a reminder card to all "Postal Patrons" within the U/L area. Only the Georgia test site used the U/L methodology for areas with rural style (P.O. Box or Rural Route) addresses. For both methodologies, respondents were asked to mail back their questionnaires using the provided envelope.

## **Nonresponse Followup with Hand Held Computers**

Enumerators were equipped with HHCs to followup with households who did not return their Census questionnaires. Nonresponse followup was conducted from April 24-July 3, 2004. This nonresponse followup operation continued until a response from the household was received, or proxy information (e.g., from a neighbor), was obtained. Enumerators used HHCs to find their assigned work areas and to collect questionnaire data. Using the HHCs provided an opportunity to assess their impact on field infrastructure and data processing. The HHCs also had global positioning system technology that improved the process of assigning addresses to their correct geographic location.

## **Coverage Improvement**

After each census, the Census Bureau is constantly evaluating whether we could have done a better job in capturing the population; therefore, coverage improvement remains one of our top priorities each census.

For the 2004 Census Test, we hoped to measure how well coverage improvement operations picked up new construction, identified gaps in targeting areas that require updating, and improved population and housing coverage using new methods and new procedures for addressing duplication issues. Several operations supported coverage improvement:

- Address Canvassing
- Unduplication
- Unduplication Field Followup
- Record Linkage
- Record Linkage Followup
- Coverage Research Telephone and Field Followup
- Group Quarters Validation
- Group Quarters Followup

## **Special Places/Group Quarters**

A significant part of coverage improvement includes correctly identifying special places and group quarters. This For the 2004 Census Test, we hoped to measure the effectiveness of improved definitions and methods for distinguishing between group quarters and housing units and for updating the Census Bureau's Master Address File in a comprehensive, integrated manner. Several operations supported Special Place/Group Quarters:



- Address Canvassing
- Group Quarters Validation
- Group Quarters Validation Field Followup

## **Questionnaire Content**

How we design the census questionnaire and present the questions on the form are an important part of improving coverage and data quality. We introduced new short form content on the 2004 Census Test questionnaire to help us with these objectives. Evaluations of questionnaire content will provide us with insight into how respondents respond to the following:

- New race and Hispanic-origin questions, including the removal of the “Some Other Race” option,
- Revised coverage questions, and
- Short form design in English and Spanish for HHCs.

# Hispanic Origin and Race Questions on Mail Forms

## Census 2000

→ NOTE: Please answer BOTH Questions 5 and 6.

5. Is this person Spanish/Hispanic/Latino? Mark ☒ the "No" box if **not** Spanish/Hispanic/Latino.

☐ No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino      ☐ Yes, Puerto Rican  
☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano      ☐ Yes, Cuban  
☐ Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino — Print group. ☒

6. What is this person's race? Mark ☒ one or more races to indicate what this person considers himself/herself to be.

☐ White  
☐ Black, African Am., or Negro  
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of enrolled or principal tribe. ☒

☐ Asian Indian      ☐ Japanese      ☐ Native Hawaiian  
☐ Chinese      ☐ Korean      ☐ Guamanian or Chamorro  
☐ Filipino      ☐ Vietnamese      ☐ Samoan  
☐ Other Asian — Print race. ☒      ☐ Other Pacific Islander — Print race. ☒

☐ Some other race — Print race. ☒

## 2004 Census Test

→ NOTE: Please answer BOTH Questions 5 and 6.

5. Is this person of Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin? Mark ☒ "No" if not of Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin.

☐ No, not of Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin      ☐ Yes, Puerto Rican  
☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., or Chicano      ☐ Yes, Cuban  
☐ Yes, another Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin — Print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard and so on. ☒

6. What is this person's race? Mark ☒ one or more races to indicate what this person considers himself/herself to be.

☐ White  
☐ Black, African Am., or Negro  
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of enrolled or principal tribe. ☒

☐ Asian Indian      ☐ Japanese      ☐ Native Hawaiian  
☐ Chinese      ☐ Korean      ☐ Guamanian or Chamorro  
☐ Filipino      ☐ Vietnamese      ☐ Samoan  
☐ Other Asian — Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian and so on. ☒      ☐ Other Pacific Islander — Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan and so on. ☒

← REVISED WORDING

← HISPANIC EXAMPLES

← RACE EXAMPLES, ADDITIONAL WRITE-IN BOX

← EXCLUDED 'SOME OTHER RACE' CATEGORY

## Obtaining Additional Race Information—Race Comments

The first three screenshots show the 'Race' screen with the following options:

- White
- Black or African American or Negro
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian Indian
- Chinese
- Pilipino
- Japanese
- Korean
- Vietnamese
- Other Asian (For example: Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian)
- Native Hawaiian
- Guamanian or Chamorro
- Samoan
- Other Pacific Islander (For example: Fijian, Tongan)
- Other Responses

The fourth screenshot shows the 'RaceComments' screen with the text 'human being' entered in the input field. Below the input field is a popup keyboard with the following layout:

123	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	=	↩
Tab	q	w	e	r	t	y	u	i	o	p	[	]
CAP	a	s	d	f	g	h	j	k	l	;	'	
Shift	z	x	c	v	b	n	m	,	.	/	↵	
Ctrl	Alt	⌘	⌘	⌘	⌘	⌘	⌘	⌘	⌘	⌘	⌘	⌘

At the bottom of the 'RaceComments' screen is a 'Return' button.

## RaceComments

If the person's race isn't listed on the Race screens, select "Other Responses" from the last Race screen, and enter the race in the RaceComments screen (*right above*) using the popup keyboard.

Probe for a Listed Race  
Before Selecting  
OtherResponses

Do not select "Other Responses" if the respondent doesn't know or refuses to provide a race. Also, probe for a listed race before selecting "Other Responses" on the Race screen. For example, remind respondents who provide a Hispanic origin that this question is asking for race and not origin.

How to Fill  
RaceComments Screen

- When you select the Other Responses box on the Race screen, the RaceComments screen will come up immediately (*without tapping "Next"*).
- Use the popup keyboard to type the name of the race provided by the respondent. Ask the respondent to spell the race for you.
- Tap "Return" at the bottom of the RaceComments screen to return to the Race screen.

## Tables 1-10, 12, and 13 With Cell Sizes Included

**Table 1. Overall Response by Mode and Site (Household Level)**

	2000		2004 <sup>3</sup>	
	New York N=111,337	Georgia N=35,731	New York N=127,574	Georgia N=41,136
<b>Mail</b>	66.90%	73.29%	49.36%	59.18%
<b>NRFU</b>	33.10%	26.71%	50.64%	40.82%

**Table 2. New York – Item Nonresponse to Hispanic Origin, Overall and by Mode**

Mode	Census 2000	2004 Census Test	Difference
<b>Overall</b>	4.81% N=316,226	3.17% N=350,986	-1.64
<b>Mail</b>	5.60% N=202,561	4.75% N=153,178	-0.85
<b>NRFU</b>	3.42% N=113,665	1.94% N=197,808	-1.48

**Table 3. New York – Item Nonresponse to Race, Overall and by Hispanic Origin\***

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Hispanic Origin</b>	<b>Census 2000</b>	<b>2004 Census Test</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>Overall</b>	7.09%	17.42%	10.33
		N=316,226	N=350,986	
	<b>Hispanic</b>	12.33%	30.90%	18.57
		N=144,902	N=163,037	
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	1.09%	3.87%	2.78
		N=156,099	N=176,838	
<b>Mail</b>	<b>Overall</b>	8.93%	9.97%	1.04
		N=202,561	N=153,178	
	<b>Hispanic</b>	15.84%	23.17%	7.33
		N=96,189	N=55,089	
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	1.16%	1.42%	0.26
		N=95,038	N=90,817	
<b>NRFU</b>	<b>Overall</b>	3.83%	23.18%	19.35
		N=113,665	N=197,808	
	<b>Hispanic</b>	5.40%	34.85%	29.45
		N=48,713	N=107,948	
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	0.98%	6.45%	5.47
		N=61,061	N=86,021	

\* Note that the Hispanic N and the Non-Hispanic N do not add up to the Overall N due to respondents who did not respond to Hispanic origin.

**Table 4. Georgia – Item Nonresponse to Hispanic Origin, Overall and by Mode**

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Census 2000</b>	<b>2004 Census Test</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Overall</b>	4.89%	2.90%	-1.99
	N=91,765	N=103,975	
<b>Mail</b>	6.16%	4.65%	-1.51
	N=66,389	N=58,415	
<b>NRFU</b>	1.57%	0.65%	-0.92
	N=25,376	N=45,560	

**Table 5. Georgia – Item Nonresponse to Race, Overall and by Hispanic Origin\***

Mode	Hispanic Origin	Census 2000	2004 Census Test	Difference
<b>Overall</b>	<b>Overall</b>	1.79% N=91,765	3.92% N=103,975	2.13
	<b>Hispanic</b>	13.54% N=4,979	44.05% N=6,638	30.51
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	0.51% N=82,296	0.68% N=94,324	0.17
<b>Mail</b>	<b>Overall</b>	1.88% N=66,389	2.27% N=58,415	0.39
	<b>Hispanic</b>	23.62% N=2,379	36.94% N=1,608	13.32
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	0.63% N=59,918	0.82% N=54,092	0.19
<b>NRFU</b>	<b>Overall</b>	1.56% N=25,376	6.04% N=45,560	4.48
	<b>Hispanic</b>	4.31% N=2,600	46.32% N=5,030	42.01
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	0.21% N=22,378	0.50% N=40,232	0.29

\* Note that the Hispanic N and the Non-Hispanic N do not add up to the Overall N due to respondents who did not respond to Hispanic origin.

**Table 6. New York – Response Distributions for Hispanic Origin\***

	Census 2000			2004 Census Test		
	Overall N=301,001	Mail N=191,227	NRFU N=109,774	Overall N=339,875	Mail N=145,906	NRFU N=193,969
<b>Hispanic</b>	48.14%	50.30%	44.38%	47.97%	37.76%	55.65%
<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	51.86%	49.70%	55.62%	52.03%	62.24%	44.35%

\* Note that shifts in item nonresponse between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to differences in response distributions.

**Table 7. New York – Response Distributions for Race\***

<b>Race</b>	<b>Census 2000</b>			<b>2004 Census Test</b>		
	<b>Overall</b> N=293,793	<b>Mail</b> N=184,481	<b>NRFU</b> N=109,312	<b>Overall</b> N=289,853	<b>Mail</b> N=137,906	<b>NRFU</b> N=151,947
White	43.92%	47.07%	38.61%	58.10%	55.36%	60.59%
Black	8.97%	8.87%	9.13%	9.93%	9.49%	10.32%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.65%	0.88%	0.26%	0.85%	0.76%	0.93%
Asian	19.99%	18.26%	22.92%	24.93%	24.61%	25.23%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.06%	0.04%	0.09%	0.08%	0.03%	0.12%
Two or More Races	7.30%	6.30%	8.97%	2.96%	3.49%	2.49%
Some Other Race	19.11%	18.57%	20.03%	3.15%	6.25%	0.33%

\* Note that shifts in item nonresponse between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to differences in response distributions.

**Table 8. New York – Percent of Some Other Race by Hispanic Origin and Mode**

<b>Mode</b>	<b>Hispanic Origin</b>	<b>Census 2000</b>	<b>2004 Census Test</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	42.08% N=127,039	7.16% N=112,654	-34.92
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	1.58% N=154,400	0.59% N=169,993	-0.99
<b>Mail</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	41.17% N=80,957	18.85% N=42,323	-22.32
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	0.82% N=93,939	0.67% N=89,523	-0.15
<b>NRFU</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	43.69% N=46,082	0.13% N=70,331	-43.56
	<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	2.76% N=60,461	0.51% N=80,470	-2.25

**Table 9. Georgia – Response Distributions for Hispanic Origin\***

	Census 2000			2004 Census Test		
	Overall N=87,275	Mail N=62,297	NRFU N=24,978	Overall N=100,962	Mail N=55,700	NRFU N=45,262
<b>Hispanic</b>	5.70%	3.82%	10.41%	6.57%	2.89%	11.11%
<b>Non-Hispanic</b>	94.30%	96.18%	89.59%	93.43%	97.11%	88.89%

\* Note that shifts in item nonresponse between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to differences in response distributions.

**Table 10. Georgia – Response Distributions for Race\***

Race	Census 2000			2004 Census Test		
	Overall N=90,121	Mail N=65,140	NRFU N=24,981	Overall N=99,895	Mail N=57,089	NRFU <sup>3</sup> N=42,806
White	65.44%	70.76%	51.55%	67.57%	74.41%	58.46%
Black	30.16%	26.15%	40.60%	30.20%	23.71%	38.86%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.27%	0.31%	0.18%	0.51%	0.30%	0.78%
Asian	0.53%	0.44%	0.77%	0.59%	0.47%	0.76%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.04%	0.03%	0.07%	0.08%	**	0.16%
Two or More Races	0.88%	0.88%	0.88%	0.80%	0.70%	0.95%
Some Other Race	2.68%	1.43%	5.94%	0.24%	0.40%	0.03%

\* Note that shifts in item nonresponse between 2000 and 2004 may contribute to differences in response distributions.

\*\* Estimate withheld due to insufficient cell size ( $n < 10$ ).



**Table 12. A closer look at Hispanic origin reporting in New York**

	<b>2000</b>			<b>2004</b>		
	<b>Overall N=133,663</b>	<b>Mail N=86,292</b>	<b>NRFU N=47,371</b>	<b>Overall N=159,348</b>	<b>Mail N=51,800</b>	<b>NRFU N=107,548</b>
Checkbox groups	26.97%	21.71%	36.55%	29.19%	23.42%	31.98%
Example groups	32.32%	34.24%	28.83%	34.95%	42.41%	31.36%
Other specific groups	23.43%	20.03%	29.63%	31.22%	25.67%	33.89%
Non-specific origins	11.75%	17.01%	2.18%	0.64%	1.74%	0.11%
Other checkbox with no write-in	1.81%	2.24%	1.03%	0.82%	1.99%	0.25%
Two or more origins	3.71%	4.77%	1.78%	3.18%	4.77%	2.41%

**Table 13. A closer look at Hispanic origin reporting in Georgia**

	<b>2000</b>			<b>2004</b>		
	<b>Overall N=4,734</b>	<b>Mail N=2,199</b>	<b>NRFU N=2,535</b>	<b>Overall N=6,539</b>	<b>Mail N=1,528</b>	<b>NRFU N=5,011</b>
Checkbox groups	84.92%	74.67%	93.81%	90.93%	82.13%	93.61%
Example groups	0.97%	1.55%	0.47%	1.96%	4.38%	1.22%
Other specific groups	2.64%	2.77%	2.52%	4.04%	3.08%	4.33%
Non-specific origins	5.09%	9.64%	1.14%	0.81%	2.68%	0.24%
Other checkbox with no write-in	0.25%	0.23%	0.28%	0.14%	0.46%	0.04%
Two or more origins	6.13%	11.14%	1.78%	2.13%	7.26%	0.56%